WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Office of Distribution
Marketing Reports Division
821 Market Street, Room 700
San Francisco, 3, California
Western Region

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MARKET NEWS REVIEWS
Week ending December 15, 1944.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

The Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations reports in "Foreign Crops and Markets" that the Mexican winter vegetable acreage for the 1944-45 season will be much lower than in 1943-44. Total tomato acreage on the Mexican west coast will be about 31,000 acres, compared with 54,000 acres last season. Pea acreage, in the important San Dimas and Sinaloa sections, has dropped from 13,700 acres to about 3,000 acres. Mexican tomatoes imported into U.S. this week totals 292 cars; U.S. shipments 46 cars. Wholesale prices Mexican tomatoes averaged $5 lug.

Potatoes - Carlot movement from Idaho to date this season 18,232 cars, last season 18,681 cars. Total U. S. shipments 165,828 cars, last year 179,084 cars. Fob and wholesale prices holding at ceiling on U.S. #1 stock. Wholesale prices on #2 stock $2.50 to $3.65 per 100 lbs.

Sweet Potatoes - Wholesale prices California markets topped at 7.7 cent per pound, in the Northwest at 11 cents. Total rail movement slightly heavier this past week than previous week, 373 cars compared with 306 cars. Pacific Coast states moved but 24 cars past week.

Lettuce - Imperial Valley, California, shipments started during the week. Western Region rail movement totaled for the week 1,330 cars, for the United States 1,338 cars. Seasons total for U. S. 10,595 cars to date, last season same date 10,710 cars.

Wholesale prices, western markets at close of week, $3.00 to $3.75 in California and $5.00 to $5.17 per crate in Northwestern markets for 4 to 5 dozen dry pack stock.

Cabbage - Carlot movement 467 cars past week, up 10.5 percent from previous week while Western Region movement dropped to 62 cars.

Fob prices Arizona points $2.00 to $2.25, 50 pound bag. Wholesale prices, $2.25 to $3.50, some Red stock up to $4.50 per crate.

Cauliflower - U.S. shipments past week 205 cars, 20 cars under previous week, total for season 2,958 cars compared with 2,165 cars last season to same date. Western Region shipments 161 cars for the week, 78.5 percent of movement for previous week.

Wholesale prices western markets mostly $2.00 to $2.25 per crate, range was $1.75 to $2.50 at close of week.

Apples - Supplies considered moderate and prices have held about steady. Receipts in carload lots on U.S. wholesale markets were 2,348 cars past week, bringing total for season to 31,340 cars, last season same date 20,239 cars.

Delicious, Ortley, Jonathan and Newtowns continue varieties most frequently quoted. Fancy and Extra Fancy grades closed the week at $3.00 to $3.85 on most western markets.

Oranges - Rail movement continued stronger past week, up 20 percent over previous week resulting in 3,353 cars, with 1,190 cars out of Western Region. Seasons total 17,092 cars, 6 percent under last season same date.

Western wholesale prices at close of week for California navels all sizes $4.50 to $5.38 per box.

Weather Conditions - Recent freezes in Texas and Florida reported by BAE as having damaged tender vegetable crops not yet harvested. Hardier crops and citrus escaped injury. In Florida about 90 percent of the snap bean crop in the Everglade section was killed. In Texas the damage was spotted, and the green pea crop appeared heaviest hit.

DAIRY AND POULTRY

Butter - Supplies for both civilians and military continued to decline. Production on the west coast was down over 12 percent from that of a year ago, and approximately 8 percent under the previous week. Deliveries of both milk and cream were held up in the East because of bad weather conditions. Resulting retarded production of butter in the East may be felt in the West later next week when fewer shipments come through.

Eggs - Los Angeles and San Francisco wholesale markets, while having heavier supplies of eggs this year at this time, have insufficient supplies of both fresh and storage eggs to meet the largest holiday demand on record. Wholesalers and other dealers have resorted to rationing to their retail dealer outlets. While the Pacific Northwest is not in as tight a situation, military needs have continued heavier and supplies have not kept pace with demands during past week. In the East production is picking up, with dealers buying cautiously as increased supplies become more evident.

1945 minimum prices to producers for "candled eggs" will be 27 cents per dozen. Prices will be supported by purchases from dealers and correlated with purchases of dried and frozen eggs for price support purposes. In areas where candling facilities are not available, WFA will stand by to purchase from producers at 24 cents per dozen "straight run". 1945 purchases will be on basis of good wood cases or new fiber cases.

Poultry - OPA Order G-4 effective December 12, 1944 permits distributors in Washington, Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, Newark, New York and Buffalo to purchase turkeys f.o.b. Texas, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, California, Oregon and Washington with transportation costs to be borne by wholesalers and retailers. In no case is the retailer to bear more than 1 cent per pound of the transportation costs. This to help relieve shortages due to heavy demand by military on poultry supplies. On western markets supplies of Christmas turkeys for civilian purchase appear to sufficient. Prices remain at ceiling. Eastern dealers are rationing supplies to regular customers.

LIVESTOCK AND MEATS

Cattle - The twelve principal markets reflected a 3 percent gain over the previous week, result 250,400 head. Western markets up at close of week 14 percent to 27,093 head. Top prices again gained 25 to 50 cents on all but Los Angeles market where the decline was as much, although top price on good fed steers was $16.50. Top prices choice vealers $13.00 to $14.50. Receipts approximately 90 percent of previous week.

Hogs - Top prices on support weights pressed ceilings, and generally were up 15 to 25 cents. Sows declined as much as 25 cents on most western markets. Receipts declined to 14,420 head on western markets, 13 percent under the previous week, and 394,100 on the twelve principal markets, 96 percent of the previous week.

Sheep - Receipts on the four western markets declined again this past week to 82 percent of the previous week resulting in 20,669 head. On the twelve principal markets there was a 24 percent increase to 284,700 head.

Prices on western markets reflected decreased receipts and good wooled lambs top prices were $13.50 to $15.00.

Reports indicate a sharp decrease in the number of lambs on feed in the western states. However, there is expected to be partially offsetting increases in the corn belt.

GRAIN PRODUCTS

Rice - Wet weather and soil conditions have continued to hold up California harvesting. Approximately 5 percent of the California crop, at the close of the week, remained to be harvested. With the 1944 crop largely bought up, dealers and millers were combing producing areas for additional supplies. Sales on rough rice were at ceiling.

Beans - An Amendment to WFO No. 45, effective December 1, divided ten classes of beans into four separate set-aside groups, and fixed the set-aside percentages as follows:

Group	New Set-Aside	Old
1. Pea, Great Northern, Small White, Flat Small White	35%	40%
2. Red Kidney (three classes)	300%	100%
3. Baby Lima	60%	100%
4. Pink	100%	100%
5. Small Red	100%	40%

Percentages are based on deliveries into civilian channels.

Wheat - Winter wheat has shown improvement resulting from more rains and improved soil moisture. However, cold weather is holding down growth.

Because the recently announced 4 cent increase in ceiling prices had been anticipated for some time, there was little change on western markets as a result of the change, although there were slight advances up to ½ cent per bushel.

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